

peace, Israel must stop settlement activity in the occupied territories. Arab nations must fight terror in all forms and recognize and state the obvious once and for all: Israel has a right to exist as a Jewish state at peace with its neighbors.

The way forward in the Middle East is not a mystery; it is a matter of will and vision and action. The way forward depends on serving the interests of the living instead of settling the accounts of the past.

To seize this moment, I am sending Secretary Powell to the Middle East to call all the parties to their responsibilities. Secretary Powell leaves on this mission tonight. He carries with him my personal commitment: America will work without tiring to achieve two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in security and prosperity and in peace.

You are living in an historic time for our country. When America was attacked 20 months ago, many thought that an age of fear and terror had arrived. Yet the world has seen something very different. America is fighting against grave threats wherever they may gather.

We're determined to help build a Middle East that grows in hope instead of resentment. Because of the ideals and resolve of this Nation, you and I will not live in an age of terror. We will live in an age of liberty.

I wish each of you well in the careers and lives that await you. I thank you for the invitation, for the honorary degree, and for the privilege of sharing this proud day with the University of South Carolina Class of 2003.

May God bless you, and may God continue to bless America. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:16 p.m. in the Carolina Center. In his remarks, he referred to Andrew A. Sorensen, president, and Lou Holtz, head football coach, University of South Carolina; Gov. Mark Sanford of South Carolina; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Tax Relief Legislation

May 9, 2003

I commend the House for making great progress toward passing a jobs-and-growth package that will spur economic growth and create jobs for American workers. The tax relief package passed by the House today includes all of the elements of my original plan, including accelerating all income tax rates, increasing small-business expensing, increasing the child credit, delivering significant marriage penalty relief, and addressing the unfair double tax on dividends. I look forward to building on this success to deliver the economic boost America's workers deserve.

Statement on Legislation To Increase Salaries for the Federal Judiciary

May 9, 2003

I am pleased to support legislation introduced in the Senate this week that would increase the annual salaries of Justices and judges of the United States. This bipartisan legislation, S. 1023, responds to the recommendation of the Chief Justice and the Judicial Conference that salary increases be enacted for the Judiciary.

Executive Order 13300—Facilitating the Administration of Justice in the Federal Courts

May 9, 2003

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to promote the prompt appointment of judges to the Federal courts, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy. The Federal courts play a central role in the American justice system. For the Federal courts to function effectively, judicial vacancies in those courts must